
GLISH AS SHE IS TAUGHT." The English "as she is taught" to the newcomer who lacks time or inclination to attend night school is a language fearfully and wonderfully strange.

In all the many Italian quarters of Greater New York books purporting to give the stranger a working knowledge of English are from twenty to thirty easy lessons are sold on every stand. Most of them are published by the same publisher, and some of them are the work of authors whose knowledge of English must have been acquired in many more lessons than they undertake to provide for their fellow countrymen.

At present to be a complete Italian-English grammar does pretty well in the formalities of declension and conjugation, but when it comes to conversational phrases the author's notions of Italian idiom are displayed in a fashion quite entertaining reading. In a dialogue between a barber and his customer, when the task is finished, the barber asks:

"What hair cut shape all right?"

In the midst of the shaving process the customer ventures to criticize the barber to that criticism the barber responds: "That's strange; it has been very well sharpened."

A list of familiar phrases occurs in the form of a dialogue. The customer asks: "Do you want them ironed?" an inquiry at the laundress touches the treatment of collars.

Whether of these handbooks affords only a grammar, a manual of polite conversation and a vocabulary of variations and arts, but also epistolary forms for all occasions and excerpts from the naturalization laws of the United States. The work is a special recommendation upon pronunciation, but the author's own with engaging frankness that has never been able to master the difficult "th" sounds of English. Accordingly he always indicates "the" as pronounced "di," in which form the "n" in "th" has the force of "e" long. Likewise "him" is indicated as "im," as "er," "whom" as "um," "whose" as "us." In the same way the "h" is dropped from hair, horse and hear. A man who drinks becomes "Di u drinks." "The child whose hair is to be cut" is to be enunciated as "Di uos air is dark."

Several of the handbooks fall into the category of mathematical solecisms, though grammar usually their strong point. One of the immigrant got his passage ticket, in brother in law to you I ask it. The teacher instructs the learner to say, "Di which run" and "Di ledi um inquire." The same authority lends the phrases, "moder to uch ul are affectionated" and "Di yud bal uch ul mee criers"—the latter for "The wood with which you cut a chair."

As to answering questions upon pronunciation for naturalization is perhaps responsible for the rejection of some applicants. The expectant citizen is told to say that United States Senators elected "from the Legislature." The citizen is to the number of Representatives in Congress is to be answered by it depends from the population—one for every 30,000 inhabitants.

The punctuation in some of the Italian-English grammars there is little or no syllabification is like Chinese writing—it utterly disregards the natural articulations. Spelling is pretty good in the case of long words, but the errors are blind to many orthographic details.

English tenses too present puzzling difficulties. One grammarian instructs his fellow countrymen to say, "has frozen last night," which is grammatically correct in Italian. The learner is advised by the same author to say, "Will you look yourself on the street?" The grocer's customer is told to say, "The request, 'Give me five cents please!'"

Some of the grammars and phrase books give epistolary models, which are free from grammatical errors and the most part properly spelled, but the style of many letters is formal, even to the verge of the bombastic. There are forms of application for work, and a variety of business letters. One of the "Mr. Finn" is dismissed as a Italian employer's place of business in these words:

"Owing to lack of business continually increasing I am compelled, with great sorrow, to deprive myself of your valuable services. This present is to certify that during the three years of your attendance at my office I have always found you to be a perfect gentleman, a willing clerk, and it is my duty to raise you."

Love letters are supplied in abundance, most of them conforming pretty well to the models of such found in "Secretario Galante," published by an Italian and in editions of many forms and sizes. In the original Italian such letters seem proper enough to express the fervor of a passion, but in English they have an odd effect. The student lover addressing an unknown lady is advised to begin in this fashion: "I am at a loss as to how I shall address a lady unknown to me. It is my duty to apologize for having taken liberty to write to you." A few lines further the writer declares: "At last I have seen you and I am glad to see you pass, and now I am at your service."

The girl who has received a love letter from a stranger is advised, in an enigmatic mood, to write in this fashion: "Your kind letter reached me this morning, and I am not sure that I should answer it at all, and certainly I should not."

The disdained recipient is recommended to reply forbidding further communications. "Any further insistence on your part will be an affront, and an affront will be your letter."

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